

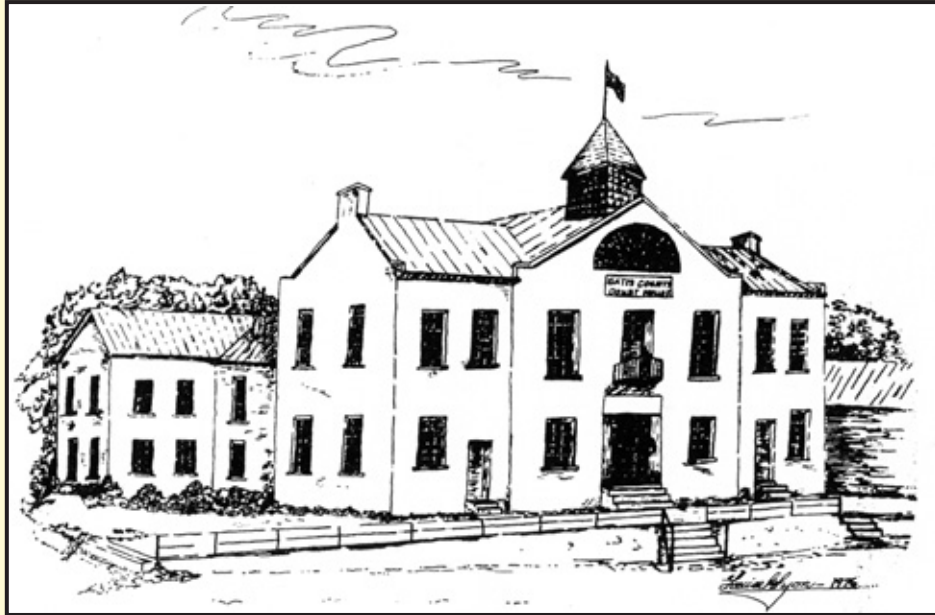
GATES COUNTY COURTHOUSE



Civil War Muster Ground



The Gates County militia had its headquarters here in the 1836 Gates County Courthouse. When the war began, the Gates Guards were organized and were mustered into Confederate service here as Co. B, 1st North Carolina Infantry. Other Gates County units included the Gates Minutemen (Co. H, 5th North Carolina Infantry) and the Orapeake Guards (Co. C, 52nd North Carolina Infantry). The 1st North Carolina Cavalry was formed from other



Gates County Courthouse – *Courtesy Gates County Historical Society*

county militia. William P. Roberts of Gates County enlisted in the 1st North Carolina Cavalry and rose in rank to become the youngest Confederate general (at age twenty-three) by war's end.

Before leaving to fight, members of the Gates Guards signed their names on the wall in a second-floor

room (now called the Patriots Room) in the courthouse. Their signatures are visible there today. In anticipation of the arrival of Union troops, the county records, which date to 1779, were removed to Allen Smith's house and remained safely concealed there for the duration of the war.

Fifty years after the end of the war, on July 18, 1915, thirty Confederate veterans assembled across the street from the courthouse to unveil the Confederate Monument. John J. Gatling, a member of the Gates Guards and Co. B, 5th North Carolina Infantry, said, "In imagination, I saw my dead comrades rising up on innumerable and forgotten battlefields and firing lines, over the valleys and hills of noble old Virginia and West Virginia and of Maryland and Pennsylvania and waving their bony hands at me they seemed to say, 'John, go forward and do your duty.'"



Gen. William P. Roberts
*Courtesy Gates County
Historical Society*



John J. Gatling
Courtesy Grafton Beaman